

CCM AGAINST PREACHING

May 29, 2006 (updated March 2, 2002; first published November 17, 2001) (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org; for instructions about subscribing and unsubscribing or changing addresses, see the information paragraph at the end of the article) -

Not surprisingly, perhaps, in light of their blatant worldliness, Contemporary Christian musicians often express their dislike for preaching. This is a powerful warning to strong Bible-believing churches. It is not only the worldly music that is a danger with CCM, it also the unscriptural message and the dangerous ecumenical associations. When fundamentalist churches bring CCM into their midst, they are associating with people who are their avowed enemies and who will undermine a strong Bible-believing position. Consider a few of the many quotes which could be given to demonstrate this:

Steven Curtis Chapman says he tries to communicate a Biblical world view in a way that WILL NOT BE “ABRASIVELY PREACHY” (*Huntsville Times*, Oct. 30, 1994). He says his quest for relevance has shown that the best way to communicate his faith is “not to preach fire and brimstone.”

An ad for “Fuel on the Fire” by **Morgan Cryar** says the song is “a good pop/rock sound for the teenage audience” because the “songs deal with youth issues and situations WITHOUT BEING PREACHY.”

The lyrics to **Donna Summer’s** music is described as being “UNPREACHILY AS POSSIBLE, the approach most likely to win the attention of an intelligent non-Christian audience” (*Contemporary Christian Music Magazine*, Oct. 1984, p. 40).

Randy Stonehill says: “I DON’T WANT TO PREACH AT PEOPLE. What I want to do is communicate the truth in the most compelling, fresh, and challenging way I can. I just want to be the best songwriter and performer, unto God, that I can be. That’s the main thing” (“Kicking Around with Uncle Rand,” *Christian Music Review*, April 1991).

Michael W. Smith, one of the most popular Contemporary Christian Musicians, plainly admits that he is not preachy. “MY SONGS ARE NOT PREACHY -- at all . . .” (Michael McCall, *Contemporary Christian*, June 1986, p. 19). Smith described his non-judgmental philosophy in an interview in the May 1998 issue of *CCM Magazine*.

In reviewing **Steve Taylor’s** music, the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* noted that “THERE IS LITTLE PREACHING IN HIS SONGS. Most of them are metaphoric story-songs written from a Christian perspective” (*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, Oct. 11, 1984). Taylor admits that people like his concerts because there is no preaching: “Our concerts attract

people because THEY KNOW THEY WON'T BE PREACHY or insult their intelligence” (Peters Brothers, *What About Christian Rock*, p. 138). Taylor was quoted as saying: “I DON'T THINK PEOPLE REALLY LIKE TO BE PREACHED AT. One of the reasons Jesus was so effective is because he told parables. I THINK IT'S INSULTING TO PEOPLE'S INTELLIGENCE TO PREACH AT THEM. No one likes to be told what to believe” (*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, Oct. 11, 1984).

This unscriptural statement ignores two facts: (1) Jesus Christ was a preacher. At least 30 times the Gospels mention that Christ preached. Christ's ministry began with preaching (Matt. 4:17), and He preached some of the hardest sermons recorded in the Bible (i.e., Mark 9; Matthew 23). (2) Christ's parables were not given for the purpose of not preaching but for the purpose of hiding truth from the willfully blind (Matthew 13:10-11).

CCM writer/performer **Wayne Watson** says: “I won't write a song that says, ‘You better get right with God.’ From my own experience I find that way sometimes makes people defensive” (Wayne Watson, *Christian Activities Calendar*, Spring/Summer 1989, p. 11). This is not how the Apostles and early Christians looked at things. They did not appear to mind making people defensive, because they preached boldly against sin and called upon people to repent. Preaching about God's holiness and man's sinfulness has always made people defensive. By the way, this is why the faithful Christians through the centuries have been hated, scorned, persecuted, and martyred. The Word of God has always been offensive and divisive. The only person who can avoid making people defensive and offending people is the person who refuses to obey God's command to preach the truth to a crooked and perverse generation (Luke 24:46-48; Ephesians 5:11; Philippians 2:15,16).

P.O.D. (Payable on Death), a hard rock group from California, also subscribes to the positive-only philosophy: An interviewer with *Pollstar* observed: “While THEY DON'T PREACH or try to ram their spirituality down anyone's throat, they hope that their positive message will have an influence on rock fans” (*Pollstar*, March 20, 2000).

In a 1987 interview with *CCM Magazine*, the late **Rich Mullins**, popular CCM writer/performer, said that he was “really sick of all this heavy-handed Christianity,” that MUSICIANS “SHOULD STOP PREACHING unless that's what God has called them to” (*CCM Magazine*, April 1987, p. 12). Yet every Christian has a responsibility before God to proclaim the Word of God to this lost world.

The Chinese CCM group **For You** advertises their music as “SPIRITUAL BUT NOT PREACHY” (*The Straits Times*, Singapore, May 18, 2001).

Cliff Young, leader of **Caedmon's Call** and founder of Watershed Records, in a 2001 interview with *Echo* magazine, condemned “Christian-cultural-Bible-Belt-legalism” which says, “Stay away from this and stay away from that.”

Jason Wade of **Lifehouse** says, "I think we have a positive message of hope. WE'RE NOT TRYING TO BLATANTLY PREACH. It all comes down to love" (David Wild, "The Rock & Roll Gospel according to Lifehouse," *Rolling Stone* magazine, June 7, 2001, <http://www.rollingstone.com/news/newsarticle.asp?nid=13983&cf=13773270>).

All of this is rebellion against the Word of God, because preaching is God's ordained way of proclaiming the truth. The words "preach" and "preaching" are mentioned 141 times in the New Testament. Jesus Christ was a preacher. John the Baptist was a preacher. The Apostles were preachers. A chief characteristic of the apostasy of the end times is to turn away one's ears from the preaching of God's Word (2 Timothy 4:1-4).

Beware of Contemporary Christian Music.

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